



HR1459

LRB099 23623 MST 51129 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, On October 20, 2014, the Chicago Police Department was called to investigate reports that Laquan McDonald was carrying a knife and breaking into vehicles; video footage of the encounter shows that McDonald was walking away from Officer Jason Van Dyke when the first shot was fired; as McDonald lay on the ground, Officer Van Dyke fired more shots into him; in total, McDonald was shot 16 times in 14 to 15 seconds; Officer Van Dyke was on the scene for less than 30 seconds before opening fire and began shooting approximately six seconds after exiting his car; the first responding officer stated that he did not see the need to use force and none of the at least eight other officers on the scene fired their weapons; and

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WHEREAS, On December 29, 2015, Officer Van Dyke pleaded not guilty to the charge of first-degree murder; this case marks the first time in 35 years a Chicago police officer has been charged with first-degree murder for an on-duty fatality; if convicted, Officer Van Dyke faces a prison sentence of 20 years to life; and

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WHEREAS, Laquan McDonald became a ward of the State at the age of three after alleged abuse and neglect complaints that were never proven; his mother, who had also been a ward of the State due to her caregiver's drug use, was only 15 at the time

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1 of McDonald's birth; and

2 WHEREAS, Laquan McDonald's early years were marked with
3 instability; he was in and out of foster care, twice being
4 placed in homes outside the family; and

5 WHEREAS, Laquan McDonald had learning disabilities and was
6 diagnosed with complex mental health problems, including
7 post-traumatic stress disorder; the Inspector General stated
8 that he was never given therapy related to sexual abuse despite
9 "being a very angry child with definite aggressive tendencies,
10 and (who) had knowledge of sex beyond his developmental age";
11 and

12 WHEREAS, According to the Inspector General's report,
13 Laquan McDonald's death should serve as a wake-up call to those
14 in child welfare; investigators cited examples in McDonald's
15 records in which services to help him and his family fell short
16 or were offered too late to make a difference; and

17 WHEREAS, Laquan McDonald's juvenile court records, usually
18 confidential, were made public to the media; and

19 WHEREAS, The Chicago Police Department has instituted a new
20 excessive force policy as a result of an ongoing investigation
21 by the United States Justice Department that began with the

1 shooting of Laquan McDonald; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
3 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
4 declare October 20, 2016 as "Laquan McDonald Day" to bring
5 attention to this tragic event in the hopes of preventing
6 similar tragedies in the future; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That we encourage this day to be used to study
8 and discuss why the State could not save Laquan McDonald and
9 others like him and what might be done to ensure it never
10 happens again; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
12 delivered to all educational institutions and all police
13 departments within the State of Illinois, and the Department of
14 Children and Family Services and the Department of Human
15 Services.